Freshman Experience Intense NROTC O-week at Fort Custer

Staff Writer: MIDN 1/C Erin Reinke, USNR

On Sunday 15AUG2010, the Notre Dame NROTC Class of 2014 began their midshipmen careers with two officer essentials—paperwork and PowerPoint. After taking care of last minute administrative work and uniform issue, 33 new midshipmen were sworn into the unit by the Commanding Officer (CO), Captain Dale M. Nees, USN. The new class, composed of six College Program students, one Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Education Program (MECEP) student, three Marine Option scholarship students and twenty-three Navy Option scholarship students, was then immediately loaded onto buses. The battalion and midshipmen staff soon joined them and began the drive to the Fort Custer Training Center, near Battle Creek, Michigan.

After their first night in the barracks, the 4/C midshipmen woke up before dawn on Monday for their first Navy Physical Readiness Test (PRT). Two minutes each of sit-ups and push-ups, followed by a 1.5 mile run, gave the new midshipmen a taste of what the Navy and Marine Corps expected of them physically. The next event was the Land Navigation Course. Each team consisted of approximately 5 midshipmen and 2 staff members. Wandering through the swampy woods of the course, the midshipmen learned to work as a team to locate their objectives and complete their task.

Tuesday brought the challenge of a 4.8 mile hike with a M4 rifle, led by the Marine Officer Instructor (MOI), Major Hart and the CO. This physically challenging hike strained them physically but gave all the midshipmen a great sense of accomplishment. The rest of the afternoon was spent on the firing range. This is a unique event to the Notre Dame Naval ROTC unit, as most units have done away with this training. The midshipmen and staff all had the opportunity to practice their marksmanship with the M4 rifle, as well as with pistols. Despite some initial trepidation from some midshipmen, who were new to shooting, a safe and exciting firing session was completed by all. Later in the afternoon, the Assistant Marine Officer Instructor (AMOI) from the University of Michigan instructed the new midshipmen in close order drill and facing movements. At the end of the day, the midshipmen learned how to clean the weapons they had fired earlier with the help of their MECEP classmate, Sgt. Leichty. The new midshipmen learned the importance of a clean, well-maintained weapon, as well as personal responsibility for its many components.

The final evolution at Fort Custer was on Wednesday in the form of the Leadership Reaction Course (LRC). The LRC consisted of several stations in which each team of five to six midshipmen had to use provided materials and follow certain rules to traverse water filled moats, wooden walls, and a rope course to try to avoid getting wet. At every station a different midshipman led their team in formulating a solution to each challenge. Not everyone was successful at staying dry, but a strong sense of camaraderie was built and a lot of fun was had during the event.

Thursday was the final day of O-Week, and after having their first night in their dorms, the new midshipmen met under the Dome and went on a campus run during which the midshipmen staff pointed out landmarks and told stories about various buildings at Notre Dame. The run finished with a figure eight around the St. Mary and St. Joseph lakes and concluded at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart’s “God, Country, Notre Dame” door. Later that morning, swim qualifications were held at the Rockne Memorial. O-Week concluded with a uniform inspection by the Big Three as well as a review of the military knowledge they had been studying since their arrival on Sunday.

O-Week gave the Class of 2014 more than an introduction to military customs, courtesies, and general military life—it gave them the opportunity to explore their individual potential as future leaders and officers in the United States Navy and Marine Corps.
Let me begin by saying what an honor and privilege it has been to serve as your BCO this semester. In 2007 when I enrolled in this program as a “heinous nasty bag,” I never could have imagined the opportunities for learning and growth that would come my way. Now, as I reflect on this semester with one foot already out the door, I can only hope that the past few months were as formative and educational for you as they have been for me.

To you young, malleable 4/C, the fun is just beginning. At O-Week, you were faces in a crowd, haggard and tired as we put you under pressure and asked you to perform. Now, you are Midshipmen. Soak it in. As the semester has progressed, I am continually impressed with your enthusiasm and desire to learn. Do not lose that. It is the key to your success as a leader both in the military and in all aspects of life. Over the coming years, you will be presented with challenges and opportunities. You will drive ships, fire weapons, dive submarines, fly planes and helicopters, and, if you’re lucky, you’ll hike all day and sleep outside in four inches of rain while a Drill Instructor takes it personally that you’re not enjoying yourself (have fun, Marines). But, most importantly, you will lead. You will lead your classmates, you roommates, and your friends. Then, one day, you will have the privilege to lead Sailors and Marines of the United States Navy and Marine Corps. Be sure that fact never leaves your mind; everything you do to train and prepare for that day truly matters.

For the 3/C, I extend my congratulations. You have passed the trial-by-fire that is your 4/C year at the University of Notre Dame, and you have emerged a more driven, more focused and more determined group than you were only one year ago. Continue to ask questions and learn from your short-comings and your successes. The next three years at Notre Dame offer a unique opportunity to explore your own leadership style. Never lose your focus and determination. As sophomores, you are just getting settled into college life after the whirlwind of freshman year, but you will be surprised at how fast the next three years will pass. Don’t forget to stop occasionally and appreciate where you are in life.

To the 2/C, you are on deck. Less than a year from now, you will be exercising your leadership skills on a daily basis as you assume staff roles on the battalion, company and platoon levels. The well-being of each individual midshipman and this battalion as a whole becomes your responsibility, and I know you won’t take it lightly. I have had the pleasure of knowing you all for more than two years, and I am overjoyed to see you take on the challenge of managing and, more importantly, bettering this group of fine young men and women. I have confidence that you will perform beyond expectations. Pass on the wisdom you have earned to the underclassmen. Don’t ever forget that you are accountable for their success or failure. Be sure you provide them the tools to achieve the former.

And finally, to my fellow 1/C, it’s been quite a ride. I reminisce on the past four years and revel in all that we’ve accomplished. For one, we made it through O-Week where Mr. Shark and Ms. Pearl threatened to end our journey all too soon. We’ve spoken to Generals and Admirals, Seamen and Master Chiefs, Lance Corporals and First Sergeants. We’ve gained new bits of wisdom from midshipman, enlisted Sailors and officers alike. We have had our trials and tribulations, but with help we have succeeded. We have become capable young people bound for positions of leadership in the Navy and Marine Corps. Still it is our performance in the field, in the air, at sea and on land that will dictate the true measure of our success. And as I stand back and admire each of you for what you’ve done and where you’re headed, I have no doubts about the future success of our Navy and Marine Corps. I am proud to call you my classmates, and I’m humbled to call you my friends. Good luck and Godspeed.

Battalion, I wish you all the best of luck in your life’s pursuits. Never settle for less than your best. Continue to put forth the effort to make yourselves better people and better leaders. I sense a hunger for learning and a thirst for knowledge that drives you all towards excellence. I hope you never quench that thirst. I hope you never satisfy that hunger. If I get my wish, you will do remarkable things with your lives.

Editor’s Note

First off, I want to give my wonderful staff and my advisor LT Panos a Bravo Zulu. We have worked hard and produced fantastic work this semester! I also want to wish the best of luck to all my fellow Seniors as we head into the fleet soon; it has been great spending these past 3 and 1/2 years together as we have developed into naval officers. May God bless you all!
A Message from the CO

CAPT Dale Nees, USN

Looks like winter has finally arrived as I stare out my window at nearly a foot of snow. I love the way we teased the first year students who are not from this area with 68 degrees in mid-November. They’re all smiles, in T-shirts and then, wham 40 mph winds on a 5 degree day. Yeah, it doesn’t take a technical major to do that math. The good news is it serves to remind them what it means to be tough - physically and mentally. It’s that toughness that sets our midshipmen apart from the rest of the students here at Notre Dame and St Mary’s College. When the temperature is “below zero” at 0600 on a Monday morning, you won’t find many students charging across campus to Loftus just so they can go inside and push themselves physically. I’m sure there are (often) times when our midshipmen wish they were one of those slumbering students still in bed, but yet they constantly challenge themselves and are better off for it in the end.

I continue to be impressed with the Notre Dame Battalion. With another good size incoming class, we are now at 130 students in the NROTC unit. That’s a 35 percent increase from when I reported here in August 2007. It shows the character of our young men and women in this program who choose to serve their country at a time of war, when they are needed the most. We will commission the largest class in a decade this year – that’s going back before 9/11. Our senior’s outstanding performance these past few years was recognized in their warfare/service designation earlier this semester. As it stands right now we expect to commission 11 Surface Warfare Officers (one nuclear propulsion), 8 Submarine Warfare Officers, 2 Naval Aviators, 2 Naval Flight Officers, 1 Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Officer, 1 Naval Reactors Engineer, 1 Medical Officer and 5 Marine Corps 2nd LTs. What a great representation across the various communities!

Once again, the seniors stepped up to the task and took on the responsibility of running the battalion, from Freshman Orientation in August to the change of command during the last week of classes. The Battalion Commander, MIDN 1/C Geraci, Battalion XO, MIDN 1/C Soley, and Battalion OPS, MIDN 1/C Leis all did a tremendous job in leading the battalion through the myriad of activities during the Fall semester. In addition to TRIMIL events such as the Fr. Jenkins (~5K) Run and Veteran’s Day ceremony, the unit actively participated in the local Marine Mud Run (won by one of our NROTC teams), the NROTC 24-hr Run to raise money for Special Olympics, food drives, Toys for Tots, and more. We also celebrated the 235th Birthdays of the Navy and Marine Corps with our annual combined Birthday Ball and were very fortunate to have Rear Admiral Payne, the Navy Midwest Regional Commander, as our guest speaker. He couldn’t tell me enough how much he enjoyed his time here, the quality of our event, our unit and most of all the Irish Midshipmen. He wrote in a note, “I was thoroughly impressed by your staff and most especially your Mids”. You should all take pride, as I do, in knowing that you are doing an outstanding job in preparing to lead our future Sailors and Marines.

Have a great Christmas Holiday and a safe return in the New Year.

Go Navy! Go Irish! Semper Fi!
Midshipmen of Notre Dame and St. Mary’s, congratulations on a fantastic Fall semester 2010. Winter has arrived with a vengeance as we wrap up academics and battalion events prior to the Christmas recess. You have had a great semester and should be mightily proud of all you have accomplished. The CO has mentioned many of your noteworthy accomplishments during the semester, so I will not reiterate those. I prefer, however, to look ahead to the coming semester and share some thoughts about what lies ahead for you as midshipmen and future naval officers.

The Spring semester 2011 will bring many opportunities and events to challenge you physically and test you mentally, in addition to the rigorous academic regimen you are undertaking at these two fine institutions. The pace of the upcoming semester will be no different from semesters past. I have been duly impressed during my time here at the plethora of activities and opportunities that present themselves to you and the rapidity at which they arrive. These upcoming events should excite and inspire you as you continue in your professional development as officers and gentlemen/gentlewomen. I challenge you to get involved, to embrace these training opportunities with gusto, and to make a difference in your lives and those of your shipmates and classmates.

The big-ticket events for the upcoming semester include Naval Leadership Weekend (NLW), Junior Parents Weekend, the Presidential Pass-in-Review with Father Jenkins CSC, the annual Spring Awards Ceremony, Bengal Bouts, the Trident Naval Society 10K March Madness Run in support of the Wounded Warrior Project, and Warrior Night, not to mention the events surrounding commencement and our commissioning ceremony. An additional inaugural event planned for the Spring semester is a forum, hosted by the student group ROTC Women, for female cadets and midshipmen in which they will have the opportunity to listen to, and interact with, distinguished female professors and an active duty female Rear Admiral (aviator) and her female Chief of Staff (who incidentally is a 1981 Notre Dame graduate and former member of our NROTC Battalion). These events will be upon you before you realize it and will require different levels of planning, involvement, and commitment depending on your billet within the battalion.

Most importantly, I want you to realize that these events and the weekly battalion drill periods exist for YOU, not for your advisors or the staff. They are YOUR events! You must get involved, take ownership, and support them wholeheartedly if they are to be successful. Do not approach them as mandatory events required by the NROTC staff; tackle them with pride and tenacity as leadership opportunities that will make you a better officer upon commissioning. You should look forward to these evolutions as you realize that their ultimate success reflects upon you and your fellow midshipmen. They are only worthwhile if you devote yourselves to them and leave them as better citizens and warriors. They complement your university academic classes and naval science classes and will, with the proper motivation and dedication, better prepare you to eventually lead the young men and women that join our ranks as the military servants of the American people.

Enjoy the holiday period as you relax and spend cherished time with your friends and family. Reflect on your outstanding performance during this past semester, be safe in your travels, and return to Notre Dame and St. Mary’s ready to hit the ground running when you return for the Spring semester 2011. FLY NAVY! GO IRISH!
The Navy/Marine Corps Birthday Ball

MIDN 1/C Ryan Shannon

The Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) Unit, University of Notre Dame, held their annual Navy and Marine Corps Birthday Ball at the Hilton Garden Inn South Bend on 3 November. The 280 guests present included Notre Dame’s Battalion of Midshipmen, active duty and retired Navy and Marine Corps members from the South Bend community, and the unit staff and their families. All were gathered to celebrate 235 years of the naval services’ histories.

The annual Birthday Ball at Notre Dame has developed into a unique event incorporating traditions of both the Navy and the Marine Corps. As unit Commanding Officer Captain Dale M. Nees stated, “the Notre Dame Birthday Ball is a hybrid type of celebration, integrating some of the more formal aspects of the Marine Corps birthday balls with the traditional Navy birthday ball.”

The guest speaker for the event was Rear Admiral Tilghman D. Payne, Commander of Navy Region Midwest. Admiral Payne talked about the importance of what the Navy and Marine Corps are doing today and what the midshipmen could expect in the future as officers in the naval services. He connected directly with the guests from the start by discarding his prepared speech and by telling the crowd that, during his days as a midshipman, he always felt relieved when a speaker had a conversation with the guests and not with their podium. The Admiral followed through brilliantly, giving a personal talk complete with a multi-media presentation. He concluded his thoughtful and forward-leaning remarks by challenging the midshipmen in attendance to prepare for the technological advances of the future and to begin creating their legacies as both naval officers and as citizens. He asked the midshipmen to ponder what they would like cited in their future epitaph so that they could begin making that occur immediately by diligent planning, thoughtfulness, and hard work.

Perhaps the most anticipated of the time-honored traditions of the Ball was the cake cutting ceremony. After cake was cut with an officer’s sword by Rear Admiral Payne and Captain Nees, the oldest Navy and Marine Corps Officers present received the first slice of cake. They then preceded to hand the second slice of cake to the youngest midshipman of their respective service; this signified the transfer of knowledge and experience of one generation of officers to the next. The formal events of the evening concluded with dancing and camaraderie by all those in attendance.

The ceremony marked the ongoing commemoration of Navy and Marine Corps traditions that are firmly rooted in the Notre Dame NROTC tradition, and it continues preparing Navy and Marine Corps midshipmen to follow in the legacy of those before them as they continue their professional development as naval officers.

Midshipmen Host 24-hour Trident Run on Campus

Staff Writer: MIDN 1/C Jonathan Asbury, USNR

On the 10th through the 11th of September 2010, the annual Trident Military Society twenty-four-hour run took place on campus. The event is held yearly to raise money for the Special Olympics of Saint Joseph County Indiana. This year the event took place on the weekend of the Michigan game so there was a large turnout of willing fans to help out with the cause.

During the run, two midshipmen run at all times around campus encouraging people to contribute to the cause of improving Special Olympics in the area. As it is a Trident run, the midshipmen are not dressed in just any kind of PT gear. One is granted the ferocious looking shark suit, and the other acts as the voice of the Trident Society, calling out for all to contribute while carrying a trident. The shark and trident bearer run through the campus, including the tailgates and buildings, such as LaFortune Student Center. This is done in one-hour shifts, and the challenge of running in a shark suit can stress the endurance of even the best athletes.

The event is a great opportunity for community service for the battalion and every year large sums are raised for the local Special Olympics. Every year a large percentage of the battalion participates, and this year was no exception with many midshipmen taking time out of very busy schedules to run and staff the collections desk (which was located by LaFortune for the 24 hour duration.)

There were runners from noon to midnight and then back to noon again, sometimes running when nary a soul stirred on campus. This is indicative of the measure of the battalion’s commitment to the cause. Unfortunately, this year there was a large rainstorm during the event which rendered the running significantly more difficult and uncomfortable than on previous sunny days. The midshipmen were undeterred, however, by the minor setback and still managed to find enough support to raise over $900 for the Special Olympics. The twenty-four-hour run provides a great opportunity for the Battalion of Midshipman not only to reach out to the community but also to show the fans that great accomplishments that can be achieved by dedicated midshipmen. Commitment is one of the Navy’s Core Values, and the twenty-four-hour run conducted annually by the Notre Dame Battalion of Midshipmen is an excellent example of those values put into practice.
Midshipmen of Notre Dame and St. Mary’s, you should be proud of yourselves - overall you have had an extremely successful semester. This year’s Freshman Orientation at NROTC Notre Dame set a new standard in best practices and is arguably the most ambitious in the country. This year’s orientation events included an M4 (rifle) and M9 (pistol) live fire, a land navigation exercise, cross fit work outs, a five mile conditioning hike, and a Leadership Reaction Course (LRC). For a second year in a row, the senior cadre and incoming freshmen deployed to Fort Custer Army National Guard Base in Augusta, Michigan. This year’s senior cadre performed magnificently and displayed maturity, professionalism, and leadership which set conditions for success and enabled this unit to accomplish an extremely aggressive training program that will serve all involved well. The seniors demonstrated what superb leading, teaching, coaching, and mentoring looks and feels like to the freshmen. All those that participated in this year’s Freshmen Orientation are to be commended.

This Fall’s physical training program is the most effective that I have seen during my tour here. The midshipmen battalion staff and physical training instructor are giving you what you deserve and are ensuring that the taxpayers (who pay your tuition) are receiving their money’s worth. You must continue to exploit this success during your well-deserved break. It is much easier (mentally and physically) to stay in shape than to get back into shape when school resumes in January. Be true to yourselves and execute a physical fitness regimen at home which focuses on your deficiencies.

As you enjoy your time away from school during the break, ensure that you also focus on spending quality time with your families and loved ones. Do not forget about the sacrifices and hardships your families endure both now and throughout the course of your careers. I would argue that they sacrifice far more than we do as Marines and Sailors and are every bit the hero that all of you are. Do not take them for granted and cherish the time you have with them.

Additionally, you need to continue to reflect on your personal goals. If you are meeting those goals, good on you - if you are not, adjust accordingly. As naval officers, those goals should not be self-serving; they should be made with the best interest in mind of those you are going to serve and lead. You get smarter, stronger, and faster for them. They do not get to choose their Platoon Commander or Division Officer - they get you. You had better be the best that you can be for them. Think about that as you sign up for classes in the spring semester; take courses that will challenge your mind so you can continue to evolve into the most capable decision maker possible. By joining this unit you have chosen a path that few Americans even dare to travel, and I challenge you not just to continue on this path haphazardly, but to attack this way of life with absolute tenacity.

I will leave you with a quote from President Ronald Reagan that I think effectively communicates the critical role that you will perform as a naval officer and member of the greatest martial culture on the planet. Shortly after 1st Battalion, 8th Marines took 241 Marine, Navy, and Army casualties in Beirut, Lebanon on the 23rd of October 1983, President Reagan stated to the press, “some people go through their whole life wondering if they ever made a difference, the Marines do not have that problem.” I would offer that American Sailors and the Midshipmen of Notre Dame and St. Mary’s do not have that problem either. You all make a positive difference every day. I commend you all on your chosen profession; you are an exceptional breed. I look forward to serving with you again next semester. Remember to stay focused - you owe that to the future young Americans and their families that you are going to serve. Semper Fidelis.
Notre Dame Invites New Lieutenants to the Unit Staff

Staff Writer: MIDN 3/C Quinn Kilpatrick, USNR

This Fall we were glad to welcome three new Lieutenants to the Notre Dame NROTC Unit. LT Daniel Reinhardt, LT Michael Peters and LT Victor Panos are the new 3/C, 2/C and 1/C advisors, respectively.

LT Daniel Reinhardt is originally from Kansas City, Missouri and attended the United States Naval Academy. After graduating in 2004 with a Chemistry degree, LT Reinhardt began training as a Naval Flight Officer. Shortly after finishing flight school, he joined the Golden Eagles of VP-9 (P-3 squadron) out of Hawaii. He served as a Naval Flight Officer on the anti-submarine and surveillance aircraft. During his time with the Golden Eagles, he made deployments to both Iraq and Qatar.

One of the main reasons he joined the Navy was because his older brother was a Naval Flight Officer. He decided to attend the United States Naval Academy because “it was something different.” With his free time, LT Reinhardt enjoys golf and other sports. We are glad to have LT Reinhardt serving as the 3/C advisor this year. Welcome to Notre Dame LT Reinhardt!

Another new face that we have at the NROTC unit at Notre Dame is a fellow Domer, LT Michael Peters. Originally from New Philadelphia, OH, LT Peters wanted to come to Notre Dame since he was a young boy. Once he was accepted to attend Notre Dame, he also accepted an NROTC scholarship to the university. Graduating in 2006 with a degree in Economics, LT Peters selected submarines as his service selection and attended Navy Nuclear Power school. His time in the Navy has included duties on the USS NEW HAMPSHIRE, based out of Groton, Connecticut, and a tour on the USS HAWAII out of Hawaii. While on the USS HAWAII he served as the Assistant Weapons Officer and the Strike Officer. When asked about why he came back to Notre Dame, LT Peters said that he came back for the same reasons he came as an undergrad, as well as the fact that it has given him the opportunity to take graduate classes. LT Peters enjoys playing golf and following all Notre Dame sports. LT Peters quote to live by, “Reach in there and grab a handful!” Welcome back LT Peters!

This year’s 1/C Advisor, LT Victor Panos, is also a Notre Dame alum. After graduating with an Economics degree in 2005, LT Panos chose to be a Surface Nuclear Officer. His first tour was in Norfolk, Virginia on the USS ANZIO (CG 68) as the Strike Officer. He then completed Navy Nuclear Power School in Charleston, SC. After his time in Charleston, he returned to Norfolk and joined the USS ROOSEVELT (CVN 71) and served as the Reactor Mechanical Division Officer. He has completed deployments to the Arabian Gulf on both the Anzio and Roosevelt.

LT Panos has been married to his high school sweetheart, Sarah, since he was a young Ensign and they have a daughter, Mallory, who is awfully talented at crawling for an 8 month old. LT Panos says it is “fantastic” to be back at Notre Dame to teach midshipmen. He also said he came back to witness a winning football team and to expose his daughter, Mallory, to Notre Dame at an early age. Along with LT Peters and LT Reinhardt, LT Panos enjoys golf. His other hobbies include running and trying to teach his daughter to start reading and stop eating books. LT Panos’ favorite quote is from Malcolm Forbes, “Men who never get carried away should be.” Welcome back to Notre Dame LT Panos!
Marine Options Participate in Annual Mud Run for a Good Cause

Staff Writer: MIDN 3/C Katherine Griffin, USMC

On Saturday, 18 September 2010, several midshipmen and officers joined Marines and South Bend citizens to trudge through mud to raise money for Toys for Tots during the annual Marine Mud Run. The run contained several walls for participants to climb over; mud pits to slog through, and ended with a high crawl through mud and rocks. The midshipmen were excited about the opportunity to get involved with the South Bend community and to help with such a great cause.

The midshipmen competed in the College/ROTC division in teams of four. All teams put forth an outstanding effort and enjoyed getting a little dirty in the process. The Navy's main effort comprised of 1/C Galiyas, 2/C Martinson, 2/C McHale, and 2/C Simone ended up walking away with first place in the College/ROTC division. They received a plaque to prove their exceptional performance. 2/C Martinson, from the winning team, summed up the run as “a challenging and excellent test of functional fitness that you don't get every day.” He also commended the efforts of the rest of his team for beating teams that did not run in boots.

Marine Option 4/C Falvey also successfully completed his first Marine Mud Run and said, “The experience was really motivational. Being a part of so many people, from active duty Marines to little kids, helping out with such a great cause was a really awesome experience. I was really impressed by the event and the St. Joe Valley Marine Corps League who put everything together.”

Even the local fire department came out to help with the cause. After finishing the race and taking countless muddy pictures, the midshipmen got sprayed down with high pressure water fire hoses. The Marine Mud Run was a success for both the achievement of our midshipmen and the fundraising effort which will help within the South Bend community.

ROTC Women

MIDN 1/C Adriana Luna, USNR

Contrary to a misinterpretation of the club name, ROTC Women does not discriminate on the basis of gender, nor must one be a cadet or midshipman to join. Rather, it provides an open forum for discussion of the challenges confronted by service members and their families, primarily for women in a once all-male military. Meetings are generally comprised of discussion of these issues and planning for such events as MAJ and Mrs. Hart’s talk with cadets and midshipmen on marriage in the military, January’s upcoming panel discussion with faculty and female officers entitled, “Women and War”, and this month’s care package drive. In the past, former Marine Corps Drill instructor Staff Sgt Kayte Macias spoke with ROTC Women about health issues and the advantages and difficulties of being a woman in the armed forces. Club advisor LT Julia LaFleur has been our mainstay through the long process of becoming a successful club.

While the club is not an element of the ROTC programs at Notre Dame, we continue to work with the Tri-Mil department, Trident Naval Society and the Air Force and Army service clubs, and hope to increase campus-wide participation in ROTC Women-sponsored activities. New members and guests are always welcome to meetings, social events, and sponsored functions.
Undefeated Notre Dame Midshipmen Play Michigan Midshipmen

Staff Writer: MIDN 3/C Quinn Kilpatrick, USNR

For the fifth year straight, Notre Dame’s NROTC flag football team defeated Michigan’s NROTC unit. Though undermanned, our Notre Dame NROTC team took control right from the start with a touchdown on the first drive of the game. Like years past, Notre Dame dominated the field offensively and defensively, holding the Wolverines scoreless for the first half. Led by senior Midshipmen 1/C Dave Galiyas, 1/C Tom Smith (a Notre Dame football walk-on) and 1/C Tony Sierawski, the Irish NROTC handled the Wolverines from Michigan, continuing the streak of five straight victories for the Golden Domers.

Midshipman 2/C Looney started at quarterback for the Irish and completed passes to 2/C McCabe, 1/C Smith and 3/C Guinn to march the Irish down the field for an early score. Though there were only about ten extra players for the Irish, contributions from everyone made them successful. MIDN 2/C Abeling and 3/C Hickey made key appearances to the Irish offense, helping to spur on a strong attack. Not only did the Irish offense dominate the Wolverines, but Notre Dame’s defense also controlled Michigan’s offense from the start with an interception on the first play.

While Notre Dame employed a spread offense attack, Michigan’s style mixed in running plays as well, which involved more contact than the passing plays. Offensive and defensive linemen ‘battled in the trenches’ on every play and proved to be the key in this affair. MIDN 4/C Carr was the dominator of the line on both sides of the ball and proved too much to handle for the Wolverines. It is because of the line on both sides of the ball that the Irish have been able to dominate for 5 years in a row.

More important than the outcome is the camaraderie built during the game. MIDN 1/C Sierawski stated, “Knowing a lot of the Mids from Michigan it’s always a great experience for me. I get to see friends I haven’t seen in a while and have a little fun with the nice little rivalry we’ve built.” Though the teams fought against each other on the field, once they graduate, they will be serving together in the United States Navy and Marine Corps.

After the game, each team shook hands and congratulated one another on a game well played. Pictures were taken of each team and the trophy, a helmet painted half to resemble a Notre Dame helmet and the other half a Michigan helmet, was handed to the Irish to return to the wardroom for yet another year. Overall, the game provided a chance for midshipmen from both teams to meet each other and to participate in a friendly game of flag football. Though the season is only one game, the Irish are ready to travel to Michigan next year in hopes of defeating the Wolverines yet again!

Change Of Battalion Command Ceremony

Editor: MIDN 1/C Skye Gatchel

Every semester the final drill period is dedicated to our Change of the Battalion Command Ceremony. This year it was held on 8 December 2010 in the JACC Fieldhouse. The Fall Semester Battalion Command included MIDN 1/C Nicholas Geraci as the Battalion Commanding Officer (BCO), MIDN 1/C Joseph Soley as the Battalion Executive Office (BXO) and MIDN 1/C Eric Leis as the Battalion Operations Officer (BOPS). MIDN 1/C Geraci has done a fantastic job leading his fellow midshipmen this semester. He and his staff worked especially hard on getting the midshipmen more involved in battalion events, and their efforts were a great success. Thank you for your job well done! During this ceremony the battalion’s command duties transitions to a new staff for the 2011 Spring Semester. This staff includes MIDN 1/C Daniel Brennan as the new BCO, MIDN 1/C Jonathan MacDurmon will be taking the position as BXO, and MIDN 1/C Alex Darr will be the BOPS. We expect to see awesome things from these fine midshipmen!
University President Trains with Cadets and Midshipmen

Staff Writer: MIDN 2/C Dana Hulke

Very few students are up before the sun, but Notre Dame ROTC students know the feeling all too well. Several times a week, students from each branch of the ROTC program rise early in the morning for physical training, but the morning of Wednesday, 22 September was a special occasion.

Decked out in the latest government-issued PT uniform, over 200 students from all three branches of the military, Navy, Army, and Air Force gathered outside Rolfl’s Sports Center for the 2010 Fr. Jenkins Run. At 0700, Fr. Jenkins, the president of the University of Notre Dame, as well as Executive Vice President John Affleck-Graves, joined the cadets and midshipmen for a 2.7-mile run around campus. Afterward, Fr. Jenkins spoke with students about the heart of Notre Dame and what their service to the university, the community, and to the country means.

Accompanying the university leaders were representatives from each branch carrying the battalion colors, as well as the commanding officers of each unit. The three ROTC branches ran as units with each sounding off cadences. The Fr. Jenkins Run offer students a chance to work out with the president of the university and also the chance to socialize with students from all branches of the ROTC program. “The Father Jenkins run was a great Tri-Mil event that helped show the pride, strength and camaraderie present in the ROTC programs at Notre Dame to the leadership of the university,” said Midshipman Erin Reinke, a senior in the Navy who is preparing for her career as a Surface Warfare Officer.

However, like all Tri-Military events which bring together the three ROTC units, the Fr. Jenkins Run contributes its share of competition along with camaraderie. “I feel like there is friendly competition between the branches, and a bit of good natured ribbing. But there is also a lot of positive encouragement and support. I think we all really enjoy getting to come together and make a strong showing. It makes me especially proud to be a part of ROTC. After four years here I definitely feel a strong sense of community, as part of the Air Force detachment, ROTC, and Notre Dame,” reported Cadet Erin Plate, a senior in the Air Force and one of the founding members of the ROTC Women Club. “It’s great to see all the other branches, but it really just comes down to everyone trying to be like the Army,” junior Cadet John Kelly good-naturedly joked. The Navy and Marine Corp politely disagree with Cadet Kelly’s comments.

The annual Fr. Jenkins Run is an event that is not only enjoyed, but is anticipated by students, staff, and faculty alike. As MIDN Reinke notes, “How many people can say they ran with Father Jenkins?”